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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
08/987,005	12/08/1997	MATHEW G. HOWELL	MICL:038	5721

7590

03/10/2005

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EXAMINER

TUGBANG, ANTHONY D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3729

DATE MAILED: 03/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

08/987,005

Applicant(s)HOWELL, MATHEW G. **Examiner**

A. Dexter Tugbang

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 November 2004.
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 22-34 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-34 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 11/22/04 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 22-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In Claim 22, it is unclear from the disclosure what is meant by the phrase of “the tray including an open groove...from the groove” (lines 2-5), which is misleading, confusing and renders the claims as being vague and indefinite. The specification does not use the term of an “open groove” explicitly, so it is unclear what edges define the “open groove”. For instance, in reviewing the applicant(s) Figure 2, the so called “open groove” is considered to be defined by at least edges 12, 14, 18 and 20 of the tray 11. Since the claim requires that there be a “notch in the first edge” (line 7) and a “notch in the second edge” (lines 7-8), one can only deduce that the

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“first and second longitudinal edges” (lines 2-3) are edges 19 and 21, respectively. So in looking at Figure 2, how is edge 19 “substantially parallel” (line 3) to edge 21?

Furthermore, how is edge 19 located at a first distance *from* the groove if edge 19 forms one outer boundary of the groove? So it appears (from Fig. 2) that the first longitudinal edge 19 is not located at any distance *from* the groove. Even further confusion is raised by the recitation of “the second longitudinal edge being located a second distance greater than the first distance from the groove”, because the edge 21 also forms another outer boundary of the groove, which again, is not at any distance from the groove. Therefore, the second distance cannot be greater than the first distance, *from* the groove.

In Claim 23, the recitation of “wherein the first...other” (lines 1-2) contradicts the previous recitation of “first and second...other” (lines 2-3 of Claim 22). How is it possible to have the first and second longitudinal edges be both substantially parallel and orthogonal, at the same time?

In Claim 29, the same problems occur in Claim 29 as with Claim 22 above.

In Claim 30, the same problems occur in Claim 30 as with Claim 23 above.

4. NOTE: No art rejections have been applied to the claims since there are a great deal of confusion and uncertainty as to the proper interpretation of the limitations of claims.

Furthermore, the examiner will not speculate as the interpretation of the limitations above in question. Therefore, it would not be proper to reject such claims on the basis of prior art. See MPEP 2173.06.

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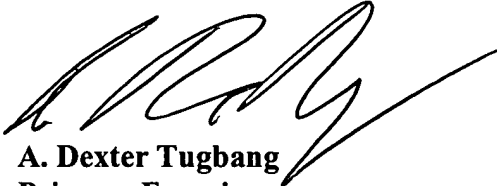
Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to A. Dexter Tugbang whose telephone number is 571-272-4570.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on 571-272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


A. Dexter Tugbang
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3729

March 4, 2005